

THE QUIET COURAGE

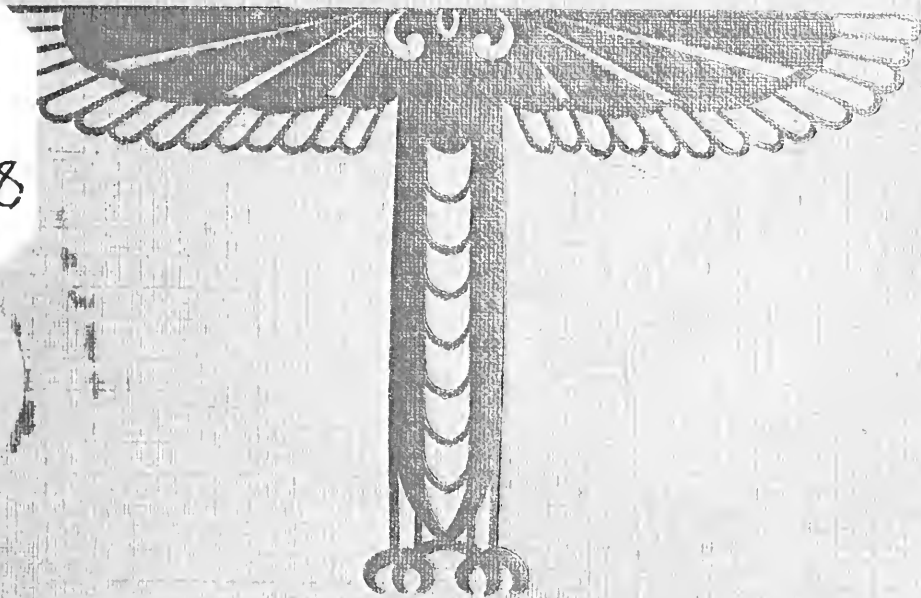
AND OTHER SONGS OF THE UNAFRAID

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1915



EVERARD JACK APPLETON





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THE QUIET COURAGE

AND OTHER SONGS
OF THE UNAFRAID

BY
EVERARD JACK APPLETON

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no. 1.

***T**O the men who understand
—or think they do.*



These songs originally appeared in Ains-
lee's, The Ladies' Home Journal, Good
Housekeeping, the Cincinnati Times-
Star, the Cincinnati Commer-
cial Tribune, and the Ob-
server. The author wishes
to thank the publishers
for their permission
to reprint the
verses in the
present
form.

FOREWORD

THE generous reception given the first edition of this little book has encouraged the author and the publishers to add to the second edition a few more Songs, with the hope that these, too, may prove helpful and pleasing to the uncritical reader.

THE AUTHOR

August, 1915

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THE QUIET COURAGE



THE QUIET COURAGE

WITH gentle patience that no man might boast
She does her daily task, year after year,
Meeting her worries as they come, she waits—
In her brave smile there is no sign of fear.
Putting behind her each white, little ghost
Of longings that were once so dear, so dear,
She lives her life to-day—to-day and here!

Not always speed those days on happy wings,
Not always from her heart trills out a song;
Sometimes it trembles on the tender lips,
Yet in the brave eyes courage lingers long.
Seeing—and understanding—still she sings
Nor feels that life has been all sad, all wrong—
To her a wondrous faith and strength belong.

Perhaps some day, the one who knows her best
Will know how through the storm and stress and
strife
She stood steadfast through troubles multiplied,
When every day dull doubt and pain were rife.
Smothering all within her faithful breast
When he had turned his back on hope, on life—
She showed the quiet courage of a wife!

STEADFAST

IF I can help another bear an ill
By bearing mine with somewhat of good grace—
Can take Fate's thrusts with not too long a face
And help him through his trials, then I WILL!
For do not braver men than I decline
To bow to troubles graver, far, than mine?

Pain twists this body? Yes, but it shall not
Distort my soul, by all the gods that be!
And when it's done its worst, Pain's victory
Shall be an empty one! Whate'er my lot,
My banner, ragged, but nailed to the mast,
Shall fly triumphant to the very last!

Others so much worse off than I have fought;
Have smiled—have met defeat with unbent head
They shame me into following where they led.
Can I ignore the lesson they have taught?
Strike hands with me! Dark is the way we go,
But souls-courageous line it—that I know!

UNAFRAID

I HAVE no fear. What is in store for me
Shall find me ready for it, undismayed.
God grant my only cowardice may be
Afraid—to be afraid!

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

ON this glad day God grant that we may find
The good which we have missed in other men;
To their small faults and errors make us blind,
Show us the way to help them—not condemn.
Give us the grace to realize that we
Are not from imperfections wholly free.

Grant that we cheer each other on the way
When it seems dark and Doubt would question
“Why?”
Help us to find contentment day by day
To live with courage—and fear not to die,
Give us a strong man’s strength to fight—and then
A child’s pure heart for evermore! Amen.

THE WOMAN WHO UNDERSTANDS

*Somewhere she waits to make you win, your soul in her
firm, white hands—*

*Somewhere the gods have made for you, the Woman Who
Understands!*

AS the tide went out she found him
Lashed to a spar of Despair,
The wreck of his Ship around him—
The wreck of his Dreams in the air;
Found him and loved him and gathered
The soul of him close to her heart—
The soul that had sailed an uncharted sea,
The soul that had sought to win and be free—
The soul of which *she* was part!
And there in the dusk she cried to the man,
“Win your battle—you can, you can!”

Broken by Fate, unrelenting,
Scarred by the lashings of Chance;
Bitter his heart—unrepenting—
Hardened by Circumstance;
Shadowed by Failure ever,
Cursing, he would have died,
But the touch of her hand, her strong warm hand,
And her love of his soul, took full command,
Just at the turn of the tide!
Standing beside him, filled with trust,
“Win!” she whispered, “you must, you must!”

Helping and loving and guiding,
Urging when that were best,
Holding her fears in hiding
Deep in her quiet breast;
This is the woman who kept him
True to his standards lost,
When, tossed in the storm and stress of strife,
He thought himself through with the game of life
And ready to pay the cost.
Watching and guarding, whispering still,
"Win you can—and you will, you will!"

This is the story of ages,
This is the Woman's way;
Wiser than seers or sages,
Lifting us day by day;
Facing all things with a courage
Nothing can daunt or dim,
Treading Life's path, wherever it leads—
Lined with flowers or choked with weeds,
But ever with him—with him!
Guidon—comrade—golden spur—
The men who win are helped by *her*!

*Somewhere she waits, strong in belief, your soul in her
firm, white hands:
Thank well the gods, when she comes to you—the Woman
Who Understands!*

MY LOVE IN THE GARDEN

[T is n't the robins' coming
That makes the spring seem near,
It is n't the brown bees' humming
The soft air, sweet and clear,
It is n't the violets' blooming,
The buds on the dogwood tree,
It's just my love in the garden
Singing a song for me!

It is n't the roar and rattle
Of strife that does not cease;
It is n't the daily battle
That will not give me peace.
It is n't the fame or fortune
That urges me endlessly,
It's just my love in the garden
Singing a song for me!

When I have finished the task, dear,
When all of the work is through,
For heav'n I will not ask, dear,
But only for you, for you.
There's joy in the thought of resting
Under the tulip tree,
With just my love in the garden
Singing a song for me!

YOU

GIVE me your hand . . . I have need of it now,
Need as never before,
For the strength that was mine is utterly gone—
A part of my life no more!

I have walked through the valley of Dead Desires
Tasting the dregs of despair;
I have sought for a sign that should give me peace,
Sought,—but it was not there.
For some, there is Faith that illumines the Path
For some, there is hope, ever strong;
But the touch of your hand is the need of me now—
The sound of your voice in song!

Shaken and numb is the soul of me, yet
It shall triumph, if yours be true,
Brain and hands shall create and build
But only for you! for you,
And even that apple of dust, Success,
Shall come, if that is your will,
Give me your hand,—with the song on your lips,—
And the ache in my heart is still!

All that is worthy in me, is yours—
What if my dreams be dead?
Fires of faith still burn in your heart,
Unbowed is your regal head.

Only your love and the light in your eyes

Can save me from self-defeat.

I am done with the Game . . . but your calm,
white soul

Shames mine when I think of retreat!

Give me your hand . . . And the strength that
is there

Shall waken my own anew,—

I can force the fight and win, by the gods!

But not for myself—for You!

THE CHRIST DAY

THE Christ Day dawns—that clear, white day of days
When Love unfolds within the soul those flowers
That set the heart to singing songs of praise
For happy moments and for useful hours—
This is the day we cross the threshold where
Love, and the joy of childhood fill the air!

If I have wrung with pain no woman's heart;
Have caused no little one to shrink. If men
Doubt not my earnest will to do my part
And bear my burdens with some courage—then
Let me draw near! . . .
I've won my right to share the Christmas cheer!

BEST OF ALL

SO like a rose, her cheeks, her dimpled chin;
So like a lily white, her forehead fair,
So like the poppies red, her perfect lips,
So like the mist at dawn, her filmy hair.
So like the very sweetest flowers that blow,
Love is her natural heritage, I know!

So like the whispering wind, her thrilling voice
Sweeping my heart strings, lighting love's white fire,
So like two star-born violets her eyes
That look into my soul and see—desire.
So like a graceful goddess, set to song,
Love is her right, withholding it were wrong!

So like a Princess, gracious, dignified,
From useless pomp and ceremony freed,
So like a Queen, crowned with her loveliness,
Her soft, strong hands no golden scepter need.
Who could not love her, be he Prince or churl?
For best of all, she is so like—a girl!

TILL THEN

THEN this is all? . . .

The way we came no longer glows
With daffodils; no more the robins call,

Beside the path there blooms no sweet wild rose.
To see what lies ahead, I dare not try;

—Sweetheart, good-bye!

Yours was the choice . . .

Within your hands, so quick to give,
Life's balance trembled once. Do you rejoice

That, broken on Fate's Wheel, to-day I live,
Still loving—still unworthy, though I try?

—Sweetheart, good-bye!

Somewhere, some day . . .

The darkened way will lightened be.
I know—I do not hope, nor wish, nor pray

But wait—for what is mine must come to me.
Then—happiness! . . . Until there dawns the
Light.

—Sweetheart, good-night!

THE MOTHER FAITH

YOURS were the hands that held me first of all,
Yours were the lips that taught mine own to smile,
Yours were the eyes that watched my every step,
And yours the heart that showed me Love worth while;
Whatever good men see, in part or whole,
Is but the dear reflection of your soul!

When others laughed at all my dreams, you held
Those dreams—and me—close to your loving breast,
Giving me strength to try, and when I failed,
Your faith alone stood firm above the rest.
For you believed some day I would succeed—
The finest spur that any man could need!

And so, to-day, though far from what I 've sought,
The goal unreached, the prize as yet unwon,
Your hands still hold on high Belief and Trust,
As once they held my baby self—your son.

* * * * *

The Mother-Faith knows naught of doubt or fear,
But goes serenely on, year after year!

THE GRAY DAY

RAIN, and the mist, and lowering skies,
An opaque haze that will not lift;
And yet I remember her wondrous eyes,
Her velvet eyes, in which love lies,
As into the past my dream-boats drift.
So, what if the rain falls ceaselessly?
My heart can sing of that memory!

The damp leaves shiver, the great trees nod
In the silent wood, where the wet winds sigh;
And yet I remember the paths we trod,
Together we trod, on the sunlit sod,
In the past that is ours, my love and I.
So what if the skies are dark as night?
There were other days that she made bright !

The twilight comes ere ever the sun
Has pierced the gloom of the clouds that cling;
Yet I remember her smile, that won
Me back to hope when I thought life done—
That wonderful, sun-filled day in spring.
So, why should I care for a day that is gray—
When memory holds *that* day, always?

DAY BY DAY

GIVE me my tithe of strength to walk the way,
By practice, not by tinkling platitudes, to show
A steadfastness that, growing day by day,
Helps others, and the inner-me, to grow;
A sturdy will, before my course is run,
To see beyond the shadowings, the sun!

Who does not sometimes feel life not worth while,
Or curse the fight that wearies brain and soul,
Is dead indeed! . . . Those triumph most who
smile
When mists of doubt obscure the Final Goal.
Then give us strength, when in the valley's gloom,
To note that on the hills the flowers bloom!

Again, and yet again, my work will fail
To measure to the simple standard set;
Despite resolves, the calmest soul must quail
And care so little, it grows numb. . . . And yet
Grant me, with other things, one touch of mirth—
And I will make my heaven here on earth!

II

MAN VERSE

THE FIGHTING FAILURE

HE has come the way of the fighting men, and
fought by the rules of the Game,
And out of Life he has gathered—What? A living,—
and little fame,
Ever and ever the Goal looms near,—seeming each
time worth while;
But ever it proves a mirage fair—ever the grim gods
smile.
And so, with lips hard set and white, he buries the
hope that is gone,—
His fight is lost—and he knows it is lost—and yet he
is fighting on.

Out of the smoke of the battle-line watching men win
their way,
And, cheering with those who cheer success, he enters
again the fray,
Licking the blood and the dust from his lips, wiping
the sweat from his eyes,
He does the work he is set to do—and “therein honor lies.”
Brave they were, these men he cheered,—theirs is the
winners’ thrill;
His fight is lost—and he knows it is lost—and yet he
is fighting still.

And those who won, have rest and peace; and those
who died have more;
But, weary and spent, he can not stop seeking the
ultimate score;

Courage was theirs for a little time,—but what of the
man who sees
That he must lose, yet will not beg for mercy upon his
knees?
Side by side with grim Defeat, he struggles at dusk or
dawn,—
His fight is lost—and he knows it is lost—and yet he
is fighting on.

Praise for the warriors who succeed, and tears for the
vanquished dead;
The world will hold them close to her heart, wreathing
each honored head,
But there in the ranks, soul-sick, time-tried, he battles
against the odds,
Sans hope, but true to his colors torn, the plaything
of the gods!
Uncover when he goes by, at last! Held to his task
by *will*
The fight is lost—and he knows it is lost—and yet he
is fighting still!

THE WAY OF THE MAN

*From the singin' hell of the fightin' top, to the stokers' hell
below,*

*We hear th' news, the sorrowful news: "Th' fightin' man
must go!"*

WHEN earth was new and life was true,
And men went brown and bare,
They fought on land, and they killed by hand,—
Their scrappin' was on the square.
'T was blow for blow, with never a show
Of bands or banners unfurled,
And th' strong men lived whilst th' weak ones
died—

For that was th' way of the world.

(And it war n't so bad, when you stop to think,
Fer the health of a bran' new world!)

As th' ages passed, man learnt, at last,

The value of strategy,

And he fought his fight with skill, not might,

Whether on land or sea.

It was swing and smash,—a stab and a gash

In th' back,—if a back was near—

Yet th' "rules" of the game was jest th' same;

T' lose was his only fear.

(Th' man who fights ain't thinkin' of rules—

T' lose is his only fear!)

Then th' Twelve-inch came "to silence th' name
Of War, that belongs to th' Past."
But th' armor-plate grewed thicker than hate,
An' th' smokeless follored fast.
Bigger and better they built their guns,
And bigger th' warships gray,
Till they measured their strength by weight and
length,
And not by the men—not they!
(Peacefully fightin' their wars, at home,
But not with th' men—not they!)

And now they swear that up in th' air
The nations will settle their scores;
So it's "Good-bye, lad," to th' ironclad,
"So long!" to the black 12-bores.
"The airship fleet will never meet
Save only to arbitrate,
For war is done, as it should be done!"
Mebbe it is . . . But wait!
(For somethin' tells me it ain't QUITE through
As long as two men can hate!)

*So this is th' way I figger it out: Man is a savage still:
He likes to eat and he likes to love—but better than all, t'
KILL!*

THE ONE

I KNEW his face the moment that he passed
Triumphant in the thoughtless, cruel throng,—
Triumphant, though the quiet, tired eyes
Showed that his soul had suffered overlong.
And though across his brow faint lines of care
Were etched, somewhat of Youth still lingered there.
I gently touched his arm—he smiled at me—
He was the Man that Once I Meant to Be!

Where I had failed, he 'd won from life, Success;
Where I had stumbled, with sure feet he stood;
Alike—yet unlike—we faced the world,
And through the stress he found that life was good.
And I? The bitter wormwood in the glass,
The shadowed way along which failures pass!
Yet as I saw him thus, joy came to me—
He was the Man that Once I Meant to Be!

I knew him! And I knew he knew me for
The man HE might have been. Then did his
soul
Thank silently the gods that gave him strength
To win, while I so sorely missed the goal?
He turned, and quickly in his own firm hand
He took my own—the gulf of Failure spanned, . . .
And that was all—strong, self-reliant, free,
He was the Man that Once I Meant to Be!

We did not speak. But in his sapient eyes
I saw the spirit that had urged him on,
The courage that had held him through the fight
Had once been mine, I thought, "Can it be gone?"
He felt that unasked question—felt it so
His pale lips formed the one-word answer, "No!"

* * * * *

Too late to win? No! Not too late for me—
He is the Man that Still I Mean to Be!

AMBITION

I 'D like to be a scientist
For just a little while;
I 'd search until I found the germ
That makes a human smile.

And when I 'd found it, I would get
A law passed, broad and firm,
Whereby the world should be inoc-
Ulated with that germ.

And when the world was all a smile,
I 'd earn uncounted wealth
By finding one more bacilli—
The Microbe of Good Health!

THE DRIVER

*This is the song of the man who drives his 'plane through
the silent night,
Whose fear is dead, whose fate is sealed, ere ever he starts
his flight!*

THERE'S seven seas that's charted, but there's
one that will not be,
(O, what's the use of knowin' things, unless you
know 'em all?)

There's eighty billion stars, accordin' to As-tron-o-
mee—

But what's the use of namin' 'em—if there is more
to fall?

With my hand upon the lever,
And my eyes upon the gauge,
I gotter drive this 'plane all night
To reach the landin' stage.

The air is boilin' ugly, though th' engine's running
strong;

But the boss won't know what's happened, if anything
goes wrong!

"It takes a nerve that's steady and an eye that's
clear," they say!

(O, what's the good of knowin' things that's mostly
guff and guess?)

It takes a nerve that's reckless, and an eye, blind in
th' day,

To operate a 'plane at night—and not land in a mess!

With the outcome, if I blunder,
I 've nothin' much to do;
They 'll bury what they find of me—
And of the others, too!

Zing! I nearly clipped his rudder. . . . Hear his
siren curse and drool,
I wonder if he thinks he owns this streak of air, the fool!

There 's the Night Mail's hum above me and th'
French Express below
(O, you get to know the tunes they sing while learnin'
how to drive!)
There 's a wrecking storm ahead of us—my indicators
show—
And there 's goin' to be some trouble in Strata
Number Five!

The game is full of trouble,
And the end is hard and short;
But the Lord do n't like a quitter
Accordin' to report!

So I try to keep her steady, and you'll hear my engine
hum
Till some night I miss the current—and wake up in
Kingdom Come!

*For this is the song of the man who drives by night
through the Sea of Air,
Whose fears are dead as the moon itself, whose watch-
word is: "I dare."*

THE LEGACY

I HAVE looked my last on joyous youth; days of
the white dreams gone,
But I purpose to walk the rest of the way with never
a longing thought;
Courage is not of an age nor a time—ever it struggles on,
Growing in strength and building true on all that
the past has wrought,
Then Courage shall go the way with me—
An heritage—and my legacy!

I have striven, in vain, for the greater things; for goals
that my youth desired,
Hotly following will-o'-the-wisps, born of Fire of Hope;
But now, in the cool of the quieter day, what if the
soul be tired?
Courage will help defeat the ills with which I have
yet to cope.
Stripped of my youth, I still may find
Help in the years I have left behind.

Leaving the course to the swift and sure, through
by-ways I will fare,
Hearing at times the joyous call of the runners
upon their way,
Learning, though late, to know the flowers, learning
at last to care
For the birds that sing, and the stars at night—the
sun-filled, wind-swept day!
Learning that Youth may leave in its place
A Courage that bears a smiling face.

THE TWO

NOW, if aught be true, then this holds true—
The man who dares is a Flame:
Setting the blood in our veins afire,
Lighting the blaze of the Great Desire—
Burning his way to Fame.
Yet the man who keeps the ground he wins,
Though his words be calm and his pace be slow—
The man who sees that the Jest begins
Where the Tragedy ends—he is good to know—
Few are there better than he to know!

The man who dares cuts a furrow wide:
He sows on a broad-cast scale
And cradles the crops on the uplands high,
Where others may note him, against the sky—
But what of the grain in the vale?
He knows no law but his own, self-made,
That daily he bends to his feverish will,—
A meteor flashing past worlds more staid,
—But the North Star guides the mariner still—
Steadfast and true it guides men still!

The meteor-man is ever blind
To aught but his will to win.
Through the choking smother of battle-mist
He glimpses the world—but it's all a-twist
And wallowing deep in sin!

While a little way off, with courage calm
The other fights on, in his quieter way,
Steadfast his brain and strong is his arm
At finish as well as start of the fray—
And he holds all he wins in the fray!

THE ASTRONOMER

HE goes through life discovering new spheres—
Computing distances between the stars;
His name on every lip the world now hears—
And yet there is one thing his triumph mars;
He lives so much above the world that he
Its ordinary beauties can not see.

Grave scientists aver that through life's span
His name will shine with luster, as to-day;
But ask them how he 's helped his fellow-man
Along the weary road—they can not say!
He sees the glories of unmeasured space—
But misses that found in the human race.

O man of science, though your studies deep
Have made the secrets of the heavens plain,
I am not envious. Your triumph keep,
And count it, if you wish, unequaled gain;
Your humble neighbor has a better plan—
He finds the good points in his fellow-man!

THE SCOUT SHIP SPEAKS

(The Yankton, the "scout-ship" of the U. S. fleet that circled the globe, slipped quietly into Hampton Roads ahead of the war vessels.)

GOD of War, I have done my work, I have plowed the
Seven Seas;

Now give me rest! For I 've need of rest, more than
any of these.

Grim they be, and full of strength, ready to fight their
kind,

But I have led them 'round the world—they have
followed behind!

Built for battle, they fought their way when waves
were black with storm,

They laughed at Neptune when he roared, their hearts
with trust were warm,

For I, the shuttle that weaves the web of safety 'round
the fleet,

Have done my work as it should be done, and now my
task 's complete.

Where they have done ten thousand miles, of thou-
sands I 've done a score.

Back and forth, by seas o'erwhelmed, courier-ship—
and more—

Watching and guiding, never at rest, I was the hand
in the night

To feel if the way were clear for them—their sense
of touch and sight.

Racked and strained in every bolt, yet true to my
inmost soul,
I 've led them home! Let Neptune rave, he has not
levied toll!
They ride to-day in the Roads, flag-trimmed, while
I, at last am free
To take my ease, my hard-earned ease, if you but
grant it me!

God of War, I have done my work, I have followed
the Seven Seas;
Now give me rest, for I 've need of rest more than any
of these;
They ride at anchor at home, at last—peers of their
fighting kind,
But I have led them every mile, while they—they
followed behind!

THE SOUL CAPTAINS

THE Guardian of the Gate looked down and watched
 them coming on,
A close-knit rank of new-born souls treading the star-
 lit dawn,
Shoulder to shoulder and step by step—sturdy as shades
 might be—
And the Guardian of the Gate, perplexed, wondered
 whom he should see.

“What souls are these?” he asked at last, “who hold
 their heads erect:
Who bend no knee, whose eyes look up,—are they
 without respect?”
The Captain lifted a steady hand, saluted and thus
 replied:
“We are the souls of the Men who Dared,—who lived
 with courage—and died!

“We asked not why; we cared not why; we gave of our
 best in the fight;
The bitter or sweet; the cruel or kind—each as he saw
 the Light:
We did not wince when the whip-lash stung, but strove
 by the rules we knew,
If you would have us on bended knee, none of us will
 go through.”

The Guardian of the Gate, wide-eyed, nodded his
haloed head.

“This is the talk of the living,” he said, “and not the
speech of the dead.”

The Captain smiled. “We are dead, indeed—but
habit is strong in the soul

And the God we seek cares not to have men crawling
to reach the Goal.

“We lived and loved; we wrought and laughed; we
did what was given to do.

Not for rewards, and not through fright, but each to
his standard true:

That the Master within grants peace and joy to humans
made good through fear

We won’t believe, and we can’t believe—else why are
we summoned here?”

The Guardian opened the Gateway wide. “Enter!”
was his command,

“The depth and breadth of the Master’s love at last
ye may understand!”

* * * * *

The Light of the Endless Peace shone down as he
opened the judgment roll

And found their names. They had earned their rest
—Captains of heart and soul!

HE IS NOT DEAD

HE is not dead! For Death can only claim
Those who have lived their lives for self alone
Or walked with Sin; and he whose very name
We love, had naught for which death should atone.

He is not dead! For when the sunlight fills
The world, I see it in his happy face;
The blue sky with his reawakening thrills,
In every gentle breeze his voice I trace.

“There is no God!” we cry, when, wrung with pain,
Our hearts rebel, and eyes with tears are dim;
Yet his own life was refutation plain—
No one but God could have created him!

He is not dead! The violets that were dear
To him, shall tell us plainly that no death
Can touch his soul, as each succeeding year
They stir, to life renewed, in Nature’s breath.

Beneath a shelt’ring elm, upon a knoll,
There rests, in flowers, the Garment that he wore;
In sunlight, love, and peace, his calm, white soul
Guides and protects those whom he loved before.

The circle of his life was small, but bright—
So golden were his deeds, his thoughts so rare,—
And now it is a halo of God’s light
That any Angel would be proud to wear!

WHAT DARK DAYS DO

I SORTER like a gloomy day,
Th' kind that jest *won't* smile;
It makes a feller hump hisself
T' make life seem wuth while.
When sun's a-shinin' an' th' sky
Is washed out bright an' gay,
It ain't no job to whistle—but
It is—

When skies air gray!

So gloomy days air good fer us,
They make us look about
To find our blessin's—make us count
The friends who never doubt,
Most any one kin smile and joke
And hold blue-devils back
When it is bright, but we must work
T' grin—

When skies air black!

That 's why I sorter *like* dark days,
They put it up to me
To keep th' gloom from soakin' in
My whole anatomy!
An' if they *never* come along
My soul would surely rust—
Th' dark days keeps my cheerfulness
From draggin'
In th' dust!

MEETIN' TROUBLE

TROUBLE in the distance seems all-fired big—
Sorter makes you shiver when you look at it a-comin';
Makes you want er edge aside, er hide, er take a swig
Of somethin' that is sure to set your worried head
a-hummin'.

Trouble in the distance is a mighty skeery feller—
But wait until it reaches you afore you start to beller!

Trouble standin' in th' road and frownin' at you, black,
Makes you feel like takin' to the weeds along the
way;

Wish to goodness you could turn and hump yerself
straight back;

Know 't will be awful when he gets you close at bay!
Trouble standin' in the road is bound to make you shy—
But wait until it reaches you afore you start to cry!

Trouble face to face with you ain't pleasant, but you 'll
find

That it ain't one-ha'f as big as fust it seemed to be;
Stand up straight and bluff it out! Say, "I gotter a
mind

To shake my fist and skeer you off—you do n't
belong ter me!"

Trouble face to face with you? Though you may n't
feel gay,

Laugh at it as if you wuz—and it 'll sneak away!

THE COURAGEOUS CLOVER

BETWEEN the street car tracks up in the park
A cheerful little clover rears its head
And gossips with the bees that fly its way
To rest, when they are over honey-fed.
The grass grows there, but cowers to the ground
Frightened and limp, when rumbling swiftly over
The street cars pass; and dust-grimed, greasy trucks
Knock to the earth the cheerful little clover.

Its dainty head is battered ruthlessly,
Its smiling face is soiled, day after day.
But every time it bravely rights itself
And greets the rising sun with laughter gay.
What though the grease and grime drip from its leaves?
What though it daily suffers untold pain?
It knows the gentle rain will come once more,
And freshen it into glad life again.

I take my hat off to that little flower—
It does n't talk, but ah, the lesson great
It teaches, by the hopeful way it lives—
A lesson that we often learn too late!
Though circumstance has placed it where each day
A juggernaut, relentless, passes by,
Each morn it lifts its bruised but plucky head
And, undefeated, smiles up at the sky!

THE BELIEVER

A SONG to the man who says, "Old chap,
Your time is coming some day;
Just keep on hoping and doing your best,
For that is the only way!"
Mayhap he is talking straight through his hat,
Mayhap his words are not true,
But, nevertheless, a health to the chap
Who says he believes in you!

Knockers are numerous nowadays,
And flatterers seek their own ends;
You scorn the first, and the second, you know,
Are nothing but fair-weather friends.
But the man who helps is the man who sticks,
It matters not what you may do;
He does n't talk much, but when you lose hope,
He says, "I believe in you!"

When the last race is run and you've won—or lost,
He shares your triumph or pain,
He presses your hand—or steadies it while
The Cup of Defeat you drain.
And when the End comes, I know there's a place
Reserved with the Favored Few
In Paradise, where he will get his reward—
The Man Who Believes in You!

WHEN JUNE GETS HERE

WHEN June gits here
I cal'culate t' take
A day or two, an' lay around th' farm,
Jest listenin' to the birds an' bees an' things
That work so hard—it won't do them no
harm.
I 'm goin' to loaf a few days of the year
When June gits here!

When June gits here
Th' craps kin grow awhile
Without me gittin' up afore daylight
An' urgin' them to hump theirselves, I guess,
Fer weeds do n't never need no help—that's
right!
Th' corn an' wheat won't have my hand to steer
When June gits here!

When June gits here,
Seems like a man finds out
That this here world was made fer work AND
fun,
An' that, ef he should quit work fer a spell
Th' universe would manage, still, to run,
It's true, although sometimes it may seem queer,
When June gits here!

When June gits here,
I 'll drap my hoe and hunt
The shady side of that old creek an' fish
An' dream,—an' eat,—an' sleep—an' be
As lazy as a man like me could wish.
Fer I am sure the Lord kin run this sphere—
When June gits here!

AND I HAVE YOU

IF you had never come into my life—
Had never let me look into your eyes,
Reading therein the hope that never dies
But glows resplendent through all bitter strife—
Then I had never known what Faith can do—
Had I not you!

If you had never walked close by my side,
And with those wondrous eyes, seen in my breast
The tiny flame that I had never guessed
Burned there, what little good I do, had died!
You had such faith, you faltered not. You
knew,—
And I—had you!

If you had never shown me life is just
Living *this* day to-day—not far ahead;
That love is best, when all is done and said,
Then would I still be trudging through the dust.
Lifting your own pure soul, you lift me, too,
While I—have you!

SOMETIMES

SOMETIMES I hesitate which road to take when
walking out;

Sometimes concerning rain or shine I entertain a doubt;

Sometimes I do n't know what to smoke, cigar or
cigarette;

Sometimes I speak to many men I'm not sure that
I've met.

But when I have to buy a hat,
My pocketbook decides all that!

Sometimes I can't choose what to eat for breakfast
or for lunch;

Sometimes I like my joys spread out, and sometimes
in a bunch;

Sometimes I do n't know which to wear, my heavy
coat or light;

Sometimes I do n't know what to say, "Sublime!" or
"Out of sight!"

But when it comes to buying clothes
My pocketbook knows what it knows!

In short, I hesitate so much at times that it would seem
I'd hesitate to hesitate—I'd dare not scheme to
scheme;

It's only when a question comes that has to do with cash
That I can settle it off-hand, and still not be so rash;

For, from an empty pocketbook
You only get one kind of look.

THE CALL OF THE MILD

CAN I roll a cigarette if the paper's damp with sweat?
Can I roll and light and smoke it, with one hand?
Can I take a bronc. and bust 'im till with babies you
could trust 'im?

Can I do it? You just bet—to beat the band!
As a puncher I'm a scream (so my bunkie lets me
dream),

I have herded cows for half a dozen years,
But I'm tired of the prairie,—the darned, old sun-dried
prairie—

And I'm sicker still of chambermaiding steers!

So it's back, back, back
Along the dear old track—

I'm going to hit the East Trail in the fall.
Where there's something bright and new,
(And a little music, too!)

I hear the mild life calling and I'll answer
to the call!

I took a fool degree at my college, but, you see,
They thought I'd shine some better in the West;
So they shipped me off out here (and forgot me, never
fear!)

With the hope that I would "do my level best!"
Did I do it? Well I did, though a soft and verdant kid,
I've learned the biz., with trimmings on the side,
With a handy bunch of dough, I'm going back to throw
Some ginger into those who have n't died.

So it's hike, hike, hike
Along the iron pike—

I'm going to hit the East Trail in the fall;
With my "breezy, Western way"
(That I've paid for, day by day,)

I hear the mild life calling and I'll answer
to the call!

When I left 'em years ago, everything there was to
know

I was wise to (Little Johnny-on-the-Spot!)
But I found that half I knew was n't useful, was n't
true—

For the West can always teach you quite a lot.
Every man here plays the game on the level, just the
same,

(If he does n't, he's not in it very long,)
But the novelty is gone, and the years are trekking on—
And I'm thirsty for the Wine of Life and—Song!

So it's back, back, back
On the homeward track—

I'm going to hit the East Trail in the fall,
And I wonder if SHE'S still
Unmarried? . . . If—she—will . . . —

I hear the mild life calling and I'll answer
to the call!

HOLD FAST

WHEN you're nearly drowned in troubles, and the world is dark as ink;

When you feel yourself a sinking 'neath the strain,
And you think, "I've got to holler 'Help'" just take
another breath

And pretend you've lost your voice—and can't
complain!

(That's the idea!)

Pretend you've lost your voice and can't complain!

When the future glowers at you like a threatening
thunder cloud,

Just grit your teeth and bend your head and say:
"It's dark and disagreeable and I can't help feeling
blue,

But there's coming sure as fate a brighter day!"

(Say it slowly!)

"But there's coming sure as fate, a brighter day!"

You have bluffed your way through ticklish situations;
that I know.

You are looking back on troubles past and gone;
Now, turn the tables, and as you have fought and won
before,

Just BLUFF YOURSELF to keep on holding on!

(Try it once.)

Just bluff YOURSELF to keep on—holding on.

Do n't worry if the roseate hues of life are faded out,
Bend low before the storm and wait awhile.
The pendulum is bound to swing again and you will find
That you have not forgotten how to smile.
(That's the truth!)
That you have not forgotten how to smile.

VALENTINES

I MIGHT, of course, send violets by the score, dear,
(And stretch quite to the breaking point, my credit)
In verses, tell the story o'er and o'er, dear—
But “really” poets have much better said it.
I might send candy, books or songs, I know,
But all of these seem stupid commonplaces,
I'd rather be a kid again and show
My love in gorgeous hearts and paper laces!
“If you love me as I love you—”
Is best of all, when it is true!

You might disguise your hand and shyly send me
A dainty volume, filled with sentiment,
But that would not be yours! . . . Dear heart,
just lend me
The right to love you daily—I'm content.
Saint Valentine may do as a reminder
For those who say, “I love you” once a year;
My love is blind, and daily growing blinder
To special days—I love you ALL days, dear!
“No knife can cut our love in two—”
My Valentine for aye—that's you!

BRED IN THE BONE

HE went to live in far Japan, where life is like a dream;
Where cherry blossoms scent the air and care
is dead, 't would seem;
Where sweet wisterias climb the porch up to the tiny
roof
And fling their flowers to the air; where trouble holds
aloof;
Where geisha girls and jinrickshas and fans and love
and tea,
Make up the life of ease he sought, from worldly
troubles free.

He went to live in far Japan, and there one day he
bought
A little doll-house for himself—at least that's what he
thought—
And settled down to rest himself; the years of grinding
work
Had made him feel at last as if he'd really like to shirk.
The work he'd done had been so hard, so strenuous
and strained
That sometimes he had welcomed death. Now in his
heart peace reigned.

He went to live in far Japan, and for a year or more
He was content to dream, and eat, and sleep upon the
floor,

To wander through the countryside and watch the
 flowers bloom,
To steep his soul in laziness, and banish earthly gloom.
And then a sloe-eyed musmee came across his path
 one day,
And love got in his clever work in just the same old way!

He went to live in far Japan, where people do not swear,
And yet he swore she should be his, she was so young
 and fair;
Ambition woke again, for him, and though she was
 content
To marry him, and stay right there, back to the States
 he went
To make a bigger fortune so that she might shine above
The other musmees. . . . That's the way we
 Occidentals love!

“JAYBIRD AIN’T NO SINGER”

JAY-BIRD ain’t no singer,
But his clothes is gay;
Flies up in er tree an’ yells
All de livelong day.
Soun’s des lahk a dorg-fight
When he ’gins ter squawl,
Othuh buhds dey stands aside—
Lets him do it all!

Jay-buhd ain’t no ahtist—
Dat do n’t bodder him!
Finds er place to holler
On de highes’ limb.
Prop he mouf wide open,
Howl des lahk a cat;
Thinks he ’s doin’ wondhers—
Will you look at dat!

Odder buhds don’t lahk him,
Dey des leave him be,
Go erway and let him think
He done bought dat tree!
Ain’t he lahk some folkses—
(Find ’em Norf an’ Souf)?
Might mek people b’lieve in him—
Ef he’d SHET HE MOUF!

AN ANSWER

I WATCHED her lovely head bend low;
Her misty hair, so soft, so bright;
I watched her color, warm and deep,
And in her blushes took delight
At last I said, "Give me your heart;
You've stolen mine!" . . . She breathed a
sigh—
"Love me!" I cried, "Love me alone!"
But all she answered was just "Y?"

Closer I came and caught her hand;
She laughed and slipped away from me,
And down the rose-lined pathway ran,
A fairy, sweet and fair to see.
At last I found her, "Now," I cried,
"You can't escape, for I must know
The man you love—his name, his name!"
But all she answered was just "O!"

Into my arms I took the witch,
(Deep in my heart she'd reigned for years):
And kissed her lips, her red, red lips,
Despite my doubts, my doubts and fears.
"His name!" I cried again, "speak quick!"
And then, somehow, I knew, I knew!

* * * * *

Her answers spelled it out for me
For tremblingly she whispered "U!"



III
THROUGH YOUNGER EYES

"MINDIN' BABY"

MINDIN' baby ain't much fun
When the other fellers say,
"Goin' ter have a game of ball;
Do n't you wisht that you could play?"
Then it seems like baby gets
Jest so heavy I can't hold
Her no more! Gee, do n't I wisht
She would hurry and get old!

Hafter set and see 'em go
With my bat an' glove and ball
Out into the alley, where
I kin hear 'em laugh an' call.
Mindin' baby ain't much fun
When you wantter play, by gee!
Still—I guess when I was small
Some one had ter care fer me.

When I think of that I jest
Pick her up and make her smile;
Poke my fingers in her cheeks—
Brings a dimple after while.
Then she puts her leetle arms
Tight around my neck an' tries
To explain it ain't HER fault—
Looks so pleadin' with her eyes!

Mindin' baby ain't much fun
Fer a lively boy, you bet,
When he'd ruther play baseball
With the other boys—and yet
When she coos and pats my cheeks,
I jest can't keep bein' mad.

When she loves me that a-way,
Mindin' baby ain't so bad!

COMPENSATION

(THE LITTLE INVALID'S CONFESSION)

MY head hurts orful bad, and when I lay
Flat down in bed, and see the birds and sky,
I wisht that I could run out doors and play—
Or leave my body here and fly—and fly!
I gotter pain 'most every place what is,
And when I try to set up, somethin' goes
Jest like a pin-wheel in my head—sizz!—sizz!—
And I kin feel it clear down to my toes.
Yet bein' sick is not so bad, someways—
Nobody has said, "Do n't!" to me for days!

Ma moves around the room jest like an elf,
Till sometimes I don't know she's really there;
And then I tell long stories to myself
Until she comes and smooths my cheeks and hair.
"What is it, dear?" she asks me, soft and low,
And then I ketch her hand and kiss it—quick—
And tell her I don't 'member—or do n't know.
What makes her turn so fast and look away?
She's never once said, "Do n't!" to me to-day!

The doctor telled her some day I'd be well,
And said that I was good to lay so still;
He ain't that pleasant always; I kin tell
That ma has ast him if I "truly will."

And so, when I hurt worse—sometimes I do—
I do n't say so to her—'t would make her get
Discouraged with me, and feel awful blue;
So I jest keep my mouth and eyes tight shet.
Ma is so good to me! She has n't said
“Do n't!” to me once since they put me to bed!

THE NEW OVERCOAT

I GOTTER overcoat, I have! A real one, an' brand
new,
My ma, she buyed it at a store; it's color is dark blue,
An' it's got buttons made of gold, 'at shine jest like
th' sun
'N I can wear it every day. O, gee! But I have fun!
Ma got it all fer me—and it
Ain't brother Bob's "cut down to fit."

I gotter overcoat, I have. It's warm as any toast,
I wear it when I go to school, and when I skate or coast;
'N all the other boys, they say, "O, lookee, here
comes Jim—
He's gotter overcoat that fits—it must feel strange
to him!"
For it's the first one, do n't you see,
Bought 'specially an' jest for me.

I gotter overcoat, I have! When ma sends me to
bed
I take it, too, an' lay it on th' piller by my head,
So when I wake I can reach out an' touch it with my
hand,
An' know it was n't jest a dream—that makes a boy
feel grand!
The boys at school can't say THIS coat
Is old enough to walk or vote!

I gotter overcoat, I have; an' when I get t' be
A man and marry Bessie Jones, my children—you will
see—
Won't hafter wear each other's clothes. Most ev'ry
week I 'll say
“Go buy yourselves jest what you want—throw those
ol' things away!”
I bet they 'll think I 'm awful good—
If pa said that to me, *I* would!

THE DANCING SCHOOL

ON ev'ry Friday afternoon my ma makes it a rule
To dress me up and send me off to this old dancing
school,

Where ev'ry girl I ever knew, and some I do n't, get's
smart

And giggles when I try to waltz, or learn the steps by
heart.

I wish the folks that like it so

Would come and dance—and let me go!

I never asked to come up here; I hate it, yes, siree!
And what's the good of doing it, no one can make me
see;

It's well enough for sissy boys and little girls, I guess
That like to laugh and talk a lot, and comb their hair
and dress,

But boys as big as I am, know

There's heaps more fun in playing "show."

Most ev'ry girl that I "invite" knows that I 'spise
to dance;

I step upon their feet and knock their knees, they say,
and—PRANCE;

And when I make my bow to them, sometimes I slip
and fall,

And then the whole room laughs at me, but I do n't
care at all.

Some day the teacher 'll put me out

And when she does, O, won't I shout!

There ain't a boy goes to this school that I can't lick,
I know,
For all they think of is their steps, and how to two-
step slow.
And then—and then, the only girl that does n't laugh
at me
Can't come at all, although she's just as nice as she
can be.
She's lame for life, I heard ma say—
But she's the NICEST, anyway!

THE GROWING GIRL

I 'M not a little bit of girl no more,
An' do n't talk baby-talk like I did when
I had to have nurse put on all I wore—
I 'm never goin' to be small again.
I 've got a teeth that 's loose—a baby teeth,
That I can wiggle jest as easy—see?
An' there 's a new one coming underneath
That will be jest as white as it can be!

An' I am growing so that mamma says
She just can't keep me in nice-lookin' clothes;
An' Uncle Bob said, "There 's other ways—
Jest buy her rubber skirts, and waists, and hose;"
He uster to make me cry, he teased me so,
But now I know he meant it just in fun,
He takes me walking now, he "likes to go
With grown-up folks," he says—an' I am one!

I know I 'm getting big, but that ain't all—
When company comes to dinner, they can see
That I am growing old as well as tall,
An' none of them talk baby-talk to me.
The chair I sit in is jest like the rest
Although my feet do n't reach down to the floor,
Of all the nice things, this I think 's the best—
I do n't sit in a high chair any more!

THE BUSY HANDY MAN

MY pa's an awful busy handy man about th' house;
He's got a chest o' tools that he won't never let
me touch;

An' when ma tells him something's broke, pa jumps
right up and says,

"I'll git to work and fix it now—it won't amount
to much."

An' when he takes his plane an' saw, an' puts on his
old clothes

An' rolls his shirt sleeves 'way, far up—I tell you, my
pa knows

The way a thing should be repaired, an' he will plan
and plan—

I'm proud as I can be that pa is such a handy man!

Last week he fixed a table that had lost its right hind
leg;

He took it to the kitchen, an' he sawed an' ham-
mered till

He jarred the plaster off the wall—at least cook said
he did—

An' let me stay to watch him, pervid-ed I kept still.
It was n't very pretty when he got it done, I know,

But pa, he ain't responsible, when furnishure acts so—

So when it would n't stand alone, ma says, "I guess
I can

Make use of it for kindling wood!" *Ain't* pa a
handy man?

But yistiddy he fixed two chairs, a window an' a door,
An' broke his saw an' bust his thumb, an' my, but
he was mad!
An' then he went to fix the lock, but said he guessed
he'd stop,
Cause ma would not encourage him—an' then he
looked real sad.
When he had gone, ma shook her head, an' says, "John,
run an' get
The carpenter down street, an' we will have things fixed
right yet,"
An' when pa came back home at night, 't was done!
Then he began
To ask ma if she was n't glad he was a handy man?

THE LETTER TO SANTA CLAUS

I WRITED a letter to Santa Claus and give it to
ma to read,
And when she was through she laughs and says, "My
darling, you do not need
Half of the things you have put down here—had n't
you better do
It over again before we send it on up the chimbley flue?"
She ast me that, but I 'm sure she knows
(As well as a mother can)
That Santa Claus is what pa calls
A very lib-er-ul man.
And when we send him our letters each year, the biggest
things always lead;
We ask for the things that we want, we do, and not
for the things we need!

I writed that letter to Santa Claus, and writed it plain
as I could;
I asked for an ottormobile and a dog, and a tent and
some scroll-saw wood;
A 'lectric car and a pony cart, like Jimmy Jones got
last year;
A gun and a ring and a sled—and some skates, and two
of his best reindeer.
When pa read my letter over he says,
"Are you sure you have n't forgot
Something you want? There 's no request
In this for a house and lot!

I feel kinder sorry for Santa Claus and his ever-willing
steed—
You 've asked for the things you want, that 's plain—
and not for the things you need!"

Then I writed another to Santa and said, "The list
that I jest now sent
May be too big, my father says—at least that is what
he meant;
So if you are poor and have n't enough to go around,
just leave out
The skates—I have got three old pair here, and they
will last no doubt."

I showed it to pa, and he says, "My son
That 's truly kind of you;
Santa appreciates unselfish boys—
And I fear there are very few."

Then he smiled at ma, and she says, "Never mind;
he is a good man, indeed;
He 'll bring you this year the things you want—and
next year the things you need!"

THE BABY AND THE BURGLAR

(WITH VARIATIONS)

ONE night I woked up quick—I 'd heard a sound
Like some one moving through our downstairs hall,
It was too late for folks to be around
And so I thought at first I 'd better call—
But then I 'membered 'bout a book I read
Of how a girl had gone downstairs one night
And found a burglar there, and what they said—
And after that the burglar 'haved all right!

So I got up and tiptoed down the stairs
And there he was! A really burglar-man!
He had our silver piled up on the chairs
Out in the dining-room, so I began:
“O, Mr. Burglar, please do n't make a noise,
My mamma's got a headache, and she 'd be
Most scared to death—you can have all my toys
If you 'll just stay down on this floor with me!”

He sort of jumped when he first heard me speak,
And then he grumbled, “Blame the sassy kid!”
And when he grabbed me up, I kissed his cheek—
(But still he did n't **ACT** as if I did!)
For he just tied me in my little chair
And stuffed a napkin in my mouth and said,
“You should n't butt in—after this, take care!
You can't believe the stories that you've read.”

* * * * *

Our cook, Miranda, found me there asleep,
When she came down next morning. O, dear me
But I was tired! After this I'll keep
Still in my bed—and let the burglars be!

THE LITTLE FELLOW

I AIN'T afraid to lay here in the dark
And listen to the hall clock tickin' slow;
I ain't afraid to hear that old mouse run
And gnaw the wall—he can't get out, I know.
I ain't afraid to shut my eyes an' hold
Them tight. But I just can't help feeling queer;
I get so lonesome, ma, I 'd like to cry—
I would n't feel so bad if you was here!

I like to hear you laughing on the porch,
And always when my pa smokes a cigar
I get a little smell of it up here—
And that's the way I know just where you are.
He's sittin' in the corner, where it's dark,
And you are close beside him—just as near
As I would get to you if you would come—
I would n't feel so bad if you was here!

Of course, I know I 'm just a little boy
And have to sleep a lot, so I will grow
Into a great big man, like pa is now—
But sometimes it is awful hard to go!
I like to hear you talk, and I could be
Lots quieter than you think I could, O dear!
I wish, ma, that you 'd *married only me*—
I would n't feel so bad if you was here!

IV

ADDED SONGS

FOREVER

INTO the immeasurable reaches of the still Unknown,
A little space ago you took your smiling way,
Led by a radiant, splendid Faith and that alone;
Lighted by love, the Path to you was bright as day.
You had no fear—as ever your one lack—
But took Death's kindly hand nor once looked
back.

Whether you found the Great Adventure all you
thought;
Whether or no that Life to your belief squares true,
The legacy you left to us—yourself—has taught,
What creeds, however good, could never do.
This world is better for your being here;
That world grew brighter when it felt you near.

You could not cease; the flow'rs, the song-birds, and
the sun
Borrow some of your spirit—sweet, and true, and
free;
You loved them all; and now in ev'ry joyous one
There is a part of you, for all eternity!
You are not far away. . . . Help us to understand
The nearness of your love—to feel your gentle
hand.

OUT OF THE SUN

IT'S a dreary sort of business, this living day by day
In a murky, shadowed Pain-World, when just
across the way
You can see the sun is shining and can hear the bird-
songs ring—
While your whistle is a little squeak—and not another
thing!
It's a dreary sort of business, but grin as others do
If you can't suppress your grumble—for your
pain's not really *you*!

It's a weary sort of business to wake each smiling morn
To find you have a "mis'ry" like a red-hot, pointed
thorn,
But the one that had *you* yesterday, is dead; and this
may not
Last quite as long—or dig as deep—or keep on being
hot!
You've got a grumble coming, but look up at the
sky,
There's lots of sunshine somewhere, and the birds
are flying high!

It's a teary sort of business, this keeping on—and on—
But the chap who is a quitter hates himself, at last
The dawn

Was hustled out of being by midday—and that, by
night—
Yet *they* came back—and didn't quit the Game, in
sullen fright!

* * * * *

If we all walked in the sunlight every day, why,
don't you see
We'd throw our own dark shadow on some better
men than we!

DEAR HEART-O'-MINE

A LONG way off you hear a song-bird trill;
At hand the city hums its endless song,
Till longingly you vision some green hill
And fret because the day seems over-long.
Dear Heart-o'-Mine were you not there before—
And, looking back, wished you were here once more?

The silent shepherd in the distant vale
Dreams not of peaceful days or calm, white nights.
He hears again the traveler's wondrous tale
Of life resplendent in the city's lights.
Cursing the fate that makes existence drear,
He hates the hills, the dales, the shadowed mere!

So, to our secret reasons for regret
Each gives full rein and longs to change the plan;
The city dwellers for the country fret,
The shepherd would he were a city man!
Dear Heart-o'-Mine, I neither sigh nor care;
While you are near the world is very fair!

WHEN SPRING CAME

WHY won't spring come?" asked the little maid
As she wistfully watched the gloomy sky,
The cold, gray clouds were scurrying by,
And the soft, sweet voice was weary—aye,
But the man saw no gray clouds! Not he—
Her eyes were blue as the summer sea!

"Why won't spring come? It's time 'twas here!"
And she sighed like a tired child at play.
But his pulse beat fast and his heart was gay—
And he thought of kissing her frown away.
For the world to him was wondrous fair—
The sun was caught in her golden hair!

"Why won't spring come? I want it *now*!"
She pouted and laughed . . . What brook could sing
Like that? The flash of a blue-bird's wing
In her lovely eyes—and it *was* Spring!
If Love came, too, without a sign,
What business is it of yours—or mine?

THE CAVE MAN'S VALENTINE

WOMAN of mine, I have sought you long,
Through forest and field and fen;
I come my way with the Stone Age throng,
Besting the best of its men.
Alone, I conquer the dinosaur,
The hydrosaurus I train;
And yet it is you and the thought of you
That troubles my heart and brain.

Woman of mine, I have wandered through
Silurian silt, waist deep;
I have forced my way to all—but you,
But ever your distance you keep.
I have laid my kill where I knew you crept
When the night had smothered the sun,
So you might eat of the game in peace—
This have I gladly done.

I have cut in the hardening clay, your name;
I have sung, in my raucous tones
Of your wondrous eyes that make me tame,—
While scraping diplodocus bones!
But now—I have gathered the last trilobite
To lay at your bare brown feet!
You notice me not, in your haughty way—
With laughter my offerings greet.

So, woman of mine, no more do I try
To win you with manners polite;
No more will you hear my lover-like cry
Disturbing the Neolith night!
For this is my Palaeozoic vow,
Sworn, as my shaking knees rub:
To-morrow I banish all civilized ways
And woo you, my dear,—with a club!

THE SOAP BOX GARDEN

THERE are gardens filled with flowers that are
worth their weight in gold;
There are gardens where the dainty blossoms bend,
and nod, and blow
In such glorious profusion that you never need be told
That a good sized fortune has been spent upon each
brilliant row!
Yet I know a little garden that is better than them
all—
Hidden in the city where life's cross has not a
crown—
And the joy it brings its owner is a thing that's
good to see——
It's the little soap box garden here in town.

In an unpretentious courtyard it is growing day
by day—
A row of boxes filled with earth, and placed against
the wall—
And the strings that lead up from the blossoms seem,
somehow, to say
To the struggling flowers, "We are here—climb up,
you can not fall."
There's a white-faced little cripple boy who
watches o'er the plants,
And waters them, and sings to them and pats
the soft earth down,

And his eyes glow with such happiness when each
new leaf appears
In his little soap box garden here in town!

There are no priceless blossoms, such as those we often
see
Displayed in rich surroundings, in the florist's win-
dow gay;
But those straggly little flowers are as dear as they
can be
To one who lives his life apart,—who can't go out
and play.
And though the buds he gathers may be small and
over-frail,
Each one that grows will straighten out the
deepest sort of frown,
So the little cripple proudly picks and gives his
flow'rs away—
Love rules his soap box garden here in town!

THE ROSE AND THE DINNER PAIL

HIS hair is gray, and his wrinkled face
Is marked by the fingers of Time,
And his back is bent as he shovels and digs,
Or mixes the water and lime.
But there's an hour that comes each day
When care lifts her darkening veil,
And he sits in the shade of a near-by tree
To open his dinner pail.

It isn't the food he sees in it
Which brings the smile to his face;
It isn't the sandwiches, coffee or pie
That he takes from their regular place;
It isn't the dinner that makes his eyes
Grow dim for a moment and fail;
It's a flower that's stuck in the battered cup,
That hangs on the old dinner pail.

His hands are calloused and dirty and red,
Yet he lifts it with tender care,
And kisses it clumsily, if there is none
Close by, to smile and to stare
And he sees, with the eyes of a lover, the wife
Of his youth, whose love does not fail,
She sends every day, with his noon-day meal,
A rose on the old dinner pail.

And when he has finished the frugal meal
He takes up his tools again,
While a smile that is tender lurks in the face
Where worry and wrinkles have been.
In the torn buttonhole of his faded old shirt
He places the blossom frail;
And wears it there, like a true knight of old—
The rose from the old dinner pail.

THE TEST

“IS life worth th’ livin’?” says I unto him,
“I’m durned if I know,” says he,
“Fer th’ trials of life air as wide as th’ worl’,
An’ double as deep as th’ sea.
An’ whether th’ joys that we gits tops ’em off
Is doubtful, dum doubtful, t’ me!”

“An’ yet there is times, you’ll grant it,” says I,
“When life ain’t a dull dreary plain.
In th’ spring of th’ year—and when you’re in love—
There’s moments you long fer again.”
“I grant it,” says he, “but spring never lasts,
An’ half of your lovin’ is pain!”

“From debts and distractions, and trials and bills;
From wimmin an’ wine,” says he,
“From troubles that’s past an’ sorrows to come
Deliver us! ’Specially me!
Now *that’s* what we pray for every night,
Do we *git* what we ask for? Not we!”

“I fear,” he concludes, and his smile, it was sad,
“That I shocks you, my friend, fer you sigh.
But alas! I hev lived—I hev loved—I hev drempt—
(An’ there’s nothin’ much wrong with me eye).
So I answers you now—an’ I’d welcome th’ end—
Life is worth th’ livin’—*to die!*”

“I knows how you feel,” says I, “fer th’ same
Emotions hev stirred in my breast;
We’ve seen all of life and we now long t’ find
How it feels to be dead—an’ at rest.”

* * * *

An’ then, him an’ I, we jumps off th’ track
As th’ Special wizzed by fer th’ West!

HE DIDN'T LIKE DOGS

HE was th' kind of a man, you know, that looks like
a three-time winner,
Breezy an' brash, but onto th' job; allus right up
an' doin',
Smooth in his talk, as a ginerall thing; but horrible
stern with the sinner
That didn't square up t' th' standards he set;
trouble fer *him* was brewin'!
A "prominent man" with a aim that was high,
But he didn't *like dorgs*—an' I wondered why.

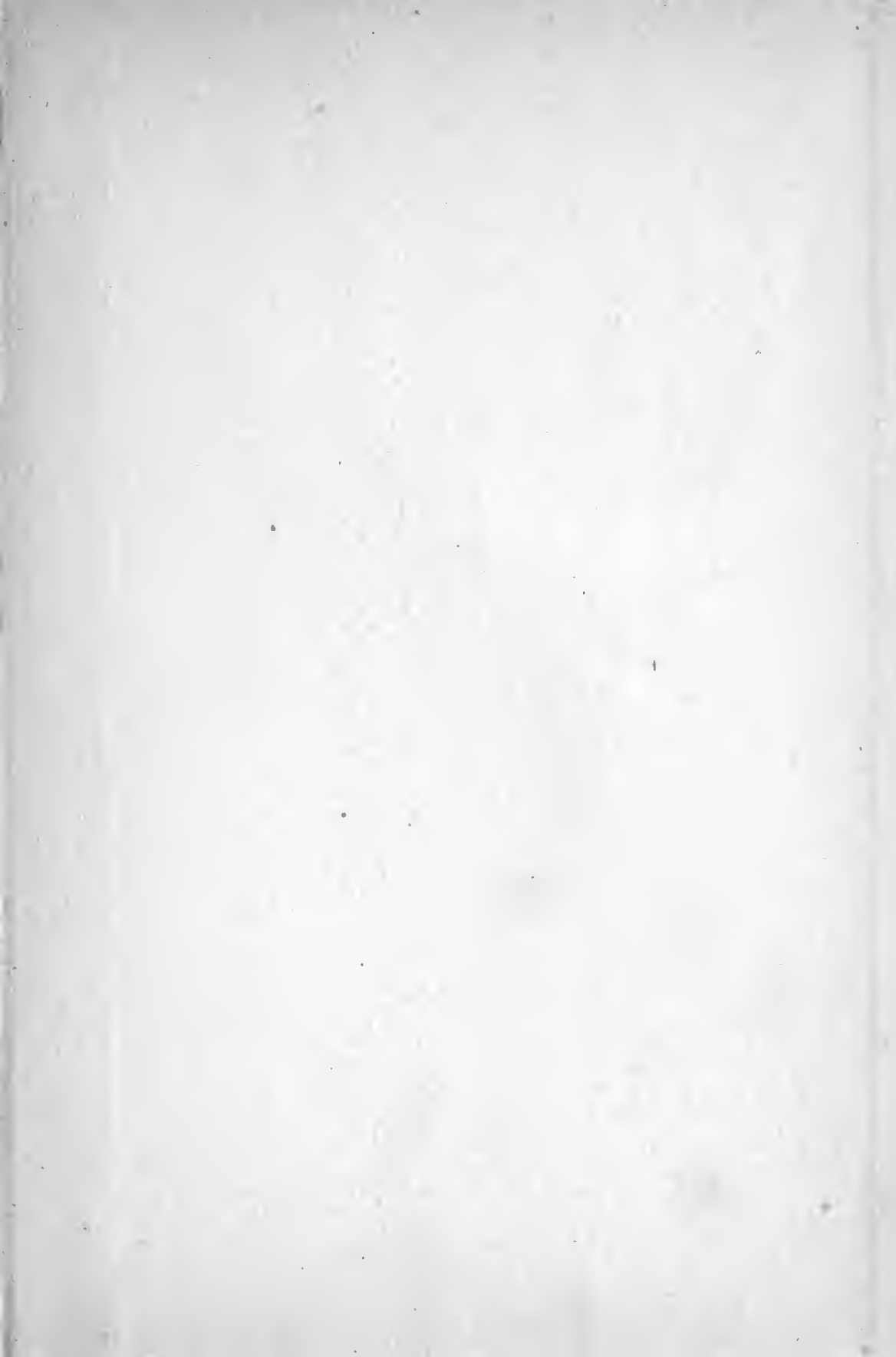
Strong in th' civic spirit game, an' given t' public
speakin',
Hammerin' down his arguments with fists that was
fat an' steady;
Hollerin' big fer th' Great Uplift, an' frownin' on folks
that weaken
In th' battle o' life or ain't all set fer th' fight—an'
willin' and ready.
An' *yit*, whenever a dorg come by,
That dorg would growl—an' I wondered why.

Got good men t' back up his plan; listened t' all he
told 'em;
Give him money whenever he ast, fer th' sake of th'
good he was schemin',
Until one day * * * Well, he didn't show up. Gone
with the cash! He'd sold 'em

A fine little gold brick—just like that—while they
was asleep and dreamin'!
He *didn't like dorgs*. And somehow, I
Ain't disposed *now* t' question why!







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